

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5652

As Reported By House Committee On:

Children & Family Services

Title: An act relating to welfare fraud.

Brief Description: Temporarily prohibiting public assistance payments for willful violators of public assistance eligibility provisions.

Sponsors: Senators Gaspard, McDonald, Smith, Quigley, Wojahn, Hargrove, Heavey, Winsley, Sheldon, Fraser, Loveland, Fairley, Oke, McAuliffe, Spanel, Kohl, Franklin, Drew, Haugen, Owen, Bauer, Snyder, Deccio and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 3/28/95, 3/31/95 [DPA].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Cooke, Chairman; Lambert, Vice Chairman; Stevens, Vice Chairman; Boldt; Buck and Carrell.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Thibaudeau, Ranking Minority Member; Brown, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Patterson and Tokuda.

Staff: David Knutson (786-7146).

Background: Recipients of public assistance who are convicted of unlawful practices designed to qualify for or continue to receive public assistance are currently subject to conviction, imprisonment, and fines.

Summary of Amended Bill: Applicants for or recipients of any form of public assistance who intentionally provide false or misleading information to establish or maintain eligibility for public assistance will be ineligible to receive assistance for six months for a first violation, 12 months for a second violation, and permanently for a third violation. The Department of Social and Health Services is required to notify the appropriate law enforcement agency and deny public assistance to a fugitive from

justice. The Department of Social and Health Services is required to participate in the "systematic alien verification for entitlements" program.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The minimum six month ineligibility period for public assistance recipients convicted of unlawful practices is replaced with a graduated period of ineligibility of six months for a first violation, 12 months for a second violation, and permanent ineligibility for a third violation. The Department of Social and Health Services is required to notify the appropriate law enforcement agency when they determine an applicant is a fugitive from justice and deny her or his request for public assistance. The Department of Social and Health Services is required to participate in the "systematic alien verification for entitlements" program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: People who fraudulently obtain public assistance should be punished.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Marc Gaspard, prime sponsor.